



America's First Choice

CONTACT

Vol. 22, No. 06

Magazine for and about Air Force Reserve members assigned
to the 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California

June/July 2004



**Travis Team has first-ever 'Kids
Understanding Deployments' day**

(See story on Pages 6-7)

Summer months bring changes, need for caution

Last month flew by. I was on the road quite a bit attending conferences and ceremonies. Since then, there have been some changes in our Air Force Reserve Command hierarchy. In case you have not heard, Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III has retired after almost 39 years of service. He spent the past six years as our commander and chief of the Air Force Reserve.

What a career! He led us through some of the biggest changes in AFRC history. He leaves very large shoes to fill. Maj. Gen. John A. Bradley was nominated by the President to replace Lt. Gen. Sherrard. By the time this comes out in print, he should have Senate confirmation and General Bradley will have assumed command of AFRC.

Within the wing we have had some additions as well. I would like to welcome Lt. Col. Linda Harlan to the wing. Lt. Col. Harlan will assume command of the 349th Mission Support Group June 5. Also Maj. Kim Dickie took command of the 349th Equipment Maintenance Squadron on the May C Flight. Congratulations to both of them.

Our wing won four of the five awards presented by the California Air Force Association and I would like to recognize these outstanding people.

Maj. George Friedman, 349th Aeromedical Staging Squadron, was

named California AFA Field Grade Officer of the Year; Capt. Roderick Grunwald, 349th Logistics Readiness Squadron, was named California AFA Company Grade Officer of the Year; Senior Master Sgt. Julie Slagle, 79th Air Refueling Squadron, was named California AFA Senior Non-commissioned Officer of the Year; and Technical Sgt. John Breitenbach, 349th Component Maintenance Squadron, was named California AFA Non-commissioned Officer of the Year. I'd like to extend my congratulations to them all. When you see these award winners pat them on the back and say, "Job well done."



U.S. AIR FORCE

Summer is upon us. Memorial Day kicked off the *101 Critical Days of Summer*, so let's clear the cobwebs off the old checklist of common sense and summer safety: I hope these tips start you thinking in the right direction:

Driving – Wear seat belts; drive defensively; plan frequent rest stops; watch speed limits; alcohol and driving NEVERmix.

Boating – Rules of the "road" apply in the water, too; carry life jackets, flashlights, and flares; be prepared for sudden weather changes; watch your speed – your wake affects others; alcohol and boating NEVERmix.

Motorcycling and bicycling – Wear your helmet; remember, the other guy is not watching for you; avoid heat



Pass and Review
By Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr.

exhaustion – rest frequently; dress appropriately; protect your face with shield or goggles; alcohol and biking NEVERmix.

Swimming – Pool and beach. Know the water depth; watch for "sleeper" waves – they're killers on this coast; swim with a buddy; no horseplay – dunking's no fun for the other guy; sunscreen, sunscreen, sunscreen; alcohol and swimming NEVERmix.

Miscellaneous – Hiking, fishing, climbing, sports, picnics, gardening. Use common sense; respect and handle gasoline properly; know your limits – moderation means more fun tomorrow; handle sports equipment and tools safely; don't take short cuts; have a first-aid kit handy; in the heat, drink lots of fluids (NOT alcohol.)

I hope all of our military fathers have a wonderful Father's Day and that everyone enjoys their celebration of the 4th of July. In short, have fun, but take care. Remember, is what you are planning safe? I want you back, healthy and rested. Enjoy your summer!

Words to inspire, guide us

by Col. Fouad Yacoub
349th Vice Wing Commander

Dr. James G. Roche, our Secretary of the Air Force said it best in his May vector:

"Respect and care for every Airman. During every stop, I also spoke about the obligation we have to respect the competence and excellence of our fellow Airmen, regardless of

gender, ethnic origin, or race.

Every Airman should view another Airman as their wingman, someone in whom they can trust their life.

We cannot and will not tolerate sexual assault or harassment of any kind.

We cannot have any Airman afraid of any other Airman. These offenses are contrary to good order and discipline and undermine the character and integrity of every member of our team.

Respecting and caring for each other also means helping your fellow Airmen during times of stress.

Each of us also has a responsibility to identify and help prevent suicides. Worry about each other, care for each other, and when you spot depression, let someone know or intervene yourself.

Our success as a service depends on this special brand of trust, loyalty, and personal fortitude."



349th Air Mobility Wing
Office of Public Affairs
520 Waldron Street
Travis AFB, CA 94535-2171
Office Hours:
Monday - Friday and UTAs
7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Phone: (707) 424-3936
FAX: (707) 424-1672

Commander

Brig. Gen. Thomas M. Gisler, Jr.

Chief, Public Affairs

2nd Lt. Robin Jackson

Deputy Chief of Public Affairs

Ronald Lake

Public Affairs Assistant

Patti Schwab-Holloway

Editor

Patti Schwab-Holloway

Public Affairs Officers

Capt. Dawn Young

Capt. Toby Marsh

Public Affairs Staff

Senior Master Sgt. Marvin Meek

Technical Sgt. Jacqueline Murray

Technical Sgt. Wendy Weidenhamer

CONTACT magazine is the monthly, authorized publication of the Air Force Reserve's 349th Air Mobility Wing, Travis Air Force Base, California. It is printed under a contract with Folger Graphics, Hayward, California. The contents expressed herein are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, or the Department of the Air Force. All photographs are U.S. Air Force photographs unless otherwise indicated.

Missing your **CONTACT** magazine? The magazine is mailed each month to the address on file with Personnel Systems. If you aren't receiving your magazine, check with your orderly room or administration section to ensure your address is correct.

CONTACT

Vol. 22, No. 06

June/July 2004

Inside this issue

4 The Challenge is being the very best

The challenge of every enlisted person is to be as prepared as they possibly can be, both professionally and technically, in order to be the very best.

4 People helping people - "Operation: MOM"

Parents of military members share concerns and take action by beginning a local support group for others like them.

5 Comm Squadron works to be ready, stay ready

The 349th Communication Squadron along with three other squadrons from around the Air Force gathered at Travis AFB, Calif., to learn from each other.

6-7 Travis Team helps military children and spouses

Nearly 500 people took part in KUDOS, a mock mobility deployment at which children and spouses get up close to some military hardware.

8 Motorcycle mentorship key to a safe ride

AMC Commander Gen. John Handy discusses implementation of the Motorcycle Mentorship plan to improve rider safety throughout the command.

8 Tips for a safe and happy 4th of July celebration

9 Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III says goodbye

Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III relinquishes command of Air Force Reserve Command and concludes a military career that spanned nearly four decades.

10 News Briefs - information and upcoming changes

11 It is in the pond we find opportunities to serve

Chaplain Tom Dawson points out how if life becomes too comfortable - you may miss out on the opportunity to best serve, not only the military, but God.

12 349th Air Mobility Wing enlisted promotions list

On the Cover



Not your father's rations:

2nd Lts. Racquel and Regine visit "the Mess Hall" on April 22 as they participated in a mock deployment during the KUDO (Kids Understanding Deployments) event.

This Travis Team event was established to give spouses and children of military members a chance to see up close what their family member does when they put on their uniform. (See story on Pages 6-7)

Cover photo by 2nd Lt. Robin M. Jackson, 349th Public Affairs

Challenge is to be prepared technically, professionally

As I draw closer to the end of my Air Force career, I am as proud today as I was on my first day assigned to this outstanding wing.

I believe the key to the many successes enjoyed by our wing is the many years of experience and the commitment from our multi-talented enlisted force.

You can bet the Air Force will continue to rely more on this strength as we face and accept bigger and more difficult assignments. Therefore, it will be the challenge of every enlisted person to be as prepared as they possibly can be, both professionally and technically, in order to be the very best in our Air Force.

We must also continue to make the most efficient use of time and resources. Learn your job and do it better than anyone else does – consistently. If you're going to succeed and reach your goals in our Air Force, you'll have to be highly motivated, extremely determined, and never accept only satisfactory results from yourself.

I believe that outstanding people will

continue to produce outstanding results. I also firmly believe in empowerment. This means both the authority to do a job and the responsibility for doing it right belongs with those who do the work. Each stripe on our chevron is based on a demonstrated increase in skill, knowledge, experience and an expectation of top-notch work.

Air Force leadership continues to show its commitment to quality-of-life and career issues. Unlimited commissary privileges, construction of our new lodging hotel, increases in our pay, benefits and entitlements and many more programs are being developed for everyone.

These programs, which affect our enlisted people, should always be given a priority second only to the ability of our leaders to accomplish our many Air Force missions.

We must keep our people informed of new policies that affect them; ensuring their living and working conditions are maintained at the highest levels possible; recognizing and rewarding outstanding



Chief's Counsel
By Command Chief Master Sgt.
Anthony L. Maddux

performers; and providing the right tools, training and trust to do the job right the first time.

Our future, America's future will be challenging. Outstanding duty performance, a positive attitude and the flexibility to accept change will be the key attributes for those serving our Air Force.

If you hang in there, there is no doubt in my mind we'll have more opportunities and a much better Air Force. I believe with our ever-changing world and the dangers that lie ahead, we've got our work cut out for us. But, I believe just as strongly that the 349th AMW enlisted force is up to any challenge.

Parent support group reaches out, grows

by Master Sgt. Barbara B. Morse
349th Air Mobility Wing

Recently I had an opportunity to meet and tour with a very unique group. They are a part of an on-going, growing, non-profitable organization called 'Operation: MOM.'

"My son, who had turned 18 and had began serving in the United States Marine Corps as an infantryman, called home to alert us that he was being deployed 'somewhere,' and that he didn't know when he would be able to contact us again," said Ms. Gloria Godchaux, co-founder and president of Operation: MOM."

She explains how she came up with the idea of starting this group.

"Watching the news and seeing so many service personnel being deployed to Afghanistan territory, I had a pretty good idea of where my son, Kevin, was going. About a week afterwards, my

husband and I received his life insurance policy in the mail. Sitting in my living room, I realized that my thoughts were beginning to paralyze me from my everyday routine because of the 'fear of the unknown.' As parents, we strive to protect our children from harms way and now our son was entering right into it. And surely, there had to be other mom's who felt like I did, but where were they? A few days later, a college friend, Dotty Selmecski, had called me to say her son came home and announced he had joined the Marines and he was leaving by the end of the week. I shared with her my concerns and asked her what she thought about beginning a local support group for others like us - she readily agreed. 'Operation: MOM' was born," said Ms. Godchaux.

With the help of the recruiting offices in Antioch and Castro Valley, Calif., postcards were mailed out to military families in the local communities and as

of March 2003, there were more than 100 parents and various other family and community members participating in this support group and other support groups that began emerging in different communities. These support groups then merged into Operation: MOM as well.

Support groups talk about kids of course, about fears, and how families are coping. All of the Operation: MOM support groups have each service branch represented and the numbers in attendance fluctuate but support is always available.

If you would like to become a member of, give a donation to, learn how to start a support group in your area, or have a loved one of yours receive "A Little Touch of Home" package from Operation: MOM, please log in on their website: www.operationmom.org or you may call them at (925) 706-1736.

349th Communications Squadron works with units throughout the Air Force

by Capt. Dawn Young
349th Public Affairs

The 349th Communication Squadron along with three other squadrons gathered recently at Travis AFB, Calif., to learn from each other.

This exercise and learning event, took place May 1st and 2nd, however the training scenario for the exercise was prepared weeks in advance. Each squadron provides input as to what they would like to “get” out of the training, their goals for the event explained, Senior Master Sgt. Chris Dinnell, one of the supervisors overseeing the training. From there the exercise developed into a two-day event with excellent hands-on training for all squadron members.

The 349th is the only West Coast communications unit that has both personnel and equipment that is deployable.

The other two units, 452nd CS from March Air Reserve Base, Calif., and the 433rd CS from Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, are only personnel units without

any deployable equipment. The third unit partaking in the exercise was the 615th Airlift Mobility Operations Squadron from Travis. This unit has deployable personnel and equipment.

“This is the first time we have exercised this way, and it has been a great hands-on event,” said Senior Master Sgt. Michael Batchelor, noncommissioned-officer-in-charge of the March ARB unit.

“Back home we only have labs to work in. Here we get to work on the real equipment. There is no better training than actually training on the equipment you would be setting up during war time,” said Sergeant Batchelor.

During real world deployments the 349th CS deploys people and equipment, while the remaining two squadrons send people to help backfill.

“It is great to be able to work with the people you may one day be in the field working with during a real-world event,” said Sergeant Dinnell.

The exercise scenario was broken into two main parts. One area, known as the hub, was the main communication office

— something similar to home base. Once home base is up and running — that means it has satellite service for computer connectivity, and telephone service, the remote access sites are then installed. The 349th squadron was in charge of setting up the hub, while the remote sites were given to the other squadrons to set up.

“We were given an exercise scenario and were told to make it happen,” explained Sergeant Batchelor.

“We started from the beginning, opening up the equipment crates, to hooking up the last printer. We had to do it all,” he added.

As the squadrons worked to hook up the remote sites, the 349th CS supervised and ensured the checklist was being followed.

However, this was not just a ‘watch and observe’ event for the 349th.

“It was definitely training for us also. We developed the checklist, so we had to make sure they worked correctly. It was a 50-50 give and take training exercise,” stated Sergeant Dinnell.

How much is enough? Size does count

by 1st Lt. Mellisa Garza
60th Medical Group

Portion sizes are growing out of control. In 1950, the average-sized soda was 6 oz. Today, it is common to see 42 oz. servings and not think twice about it. If it were a regular soda, this would be a difference of 450 calories.

According to clinical studies, Americans underestimate the amount of calories they consume each day by as much as 25 percent. Such “unconscious eating” helps to explain why more Americans than ever — 64 percent — are now considered overweight.

And the Air Force is not far behind. Today, 54 percent of our active-duty Air Force is considered overweight. I want to take this opportunity to share some tips and pointers to help you “Eat Smart and Stay Healthy.”

Did you know...

-- One bagel now has an average of 400 calories, which is similar to half a loaf of bread? Consider an English muffin or whole wheat toast and cut the calories in half.

-- Fresh-baked or pre-packaged oversized muffins can have as much as 500 calories depending on its size and ingredients? Go with a granola bar or a piece of fruit instead.

-- A gourmet coffee should be considered a meal? A large white chocolate mocha made with whole milk has 600 calories and 15 grams of saturated fat! Skip the whipped cream and ask for skim milk and you will save 200 calories — order a smaller size and you’ll save even more.

Americans must become aware of what they are consuming to help combat weight creep. “Weight

creep” is the seemingly harmless 1.5-2 pound weight gain each year. Over several years, the accumulated weight gain reaches a significant amount.

To help learn how to minimize portion sizes and prevent unconscious eating to stay fit and healthy, call the Health and Wellness Center at (707) 424-4292 or visit the Eat Right website at www.eatright.org.

Together, we can all assure a “Fit to Fight” Force.



KUDOS event answers age old question

by Master Sgt. Scott King and
Patti Schwab-Holloway

60th/349th Public Affairs

Kids Understanding Deployment, an idea brought to reality jointly by the 60th Air Mobility Wing Family Support Center, 349th Family Readiness Office, Travis Unified School District and the David Grant Medical Center's Family Advocacy program, and it turn to be a wonderful experience and promises to be even more popular next year.

On April 22 nearly 500 people took part in a mock mobility processing and familiarization day. Military members invited out their children and spouses to get up-close and personal with some military hardware, such as chemical warfare gear, a Humvee, tents and hard-sided shelters.

"It is a great opportunity to have my girls, Racquel and Regine, out to see some of what Mommy does when she

puts on her uniform," said 2nd Lt. Robin Jackson, 349th Air Mobility Wing.

"They see and hear so much about the military on the news and from other people and not all of it positive. Having them out to where I work, able to walk around the base and see the equipment is an awesome opportunity -- it takes some of the mystery and fear out of Mom being in the military and explains what the mission is all about," she said.

The goal of this event was to alleviate some of the family stresses of deployments by showing children some of the inner workings of the mobility process.

"High emphasis was on family togetherness through hands-on, interactive demonstrations for kids," said Beth Kaiser, Family Advocacy nurse at David Grant Medical Center. "I think the kids and spouses enjoyed the event and I hope they walked away from it with a greater understanding of deployments."

KUDOS was three months in the making and a joint effort; really a Travis Team event.

Children, dressed in military garb, processed through a mock mobility line, viewed and "got to know" equipment such as chemical warfare gear, Humvees, tents and shelters. They also toured a C-5 static display and visited Base "X," a tent city built up by civil engineers.

"I liked it," said 4-year-old Derek Hilfiker, son of 9th Aerial Refueling Squadron pilot, Capt. Jeff Hilfiker. "I liked the C-5 the best."

"It was a great idea and my family had a good time," Captain Hilfiker said. "It gave spouses and children the opportunity to see how we deploy and also what it is like when we get to the deployed location — it was well organized and provided real insight into actual deployment conditions."

Not only did the children enjoy and learn from it, but the spouses as well took something away from the event.

"It was very well put together,"



Where'd they go?: 2nd Lt.s Racquel and Regine did escape from their Mom during the Kids Understanding



photo by Amy Thureau, Base Multimedia Service Center

Where do I sign up?: Mr. Jack Watts, Director of the 349th AMW's Family Readiness Office, provides Air Force Reserve gift bags with fun stuff for the kids.



Incoming smiles: Travis children wave from behind sandbags during the Kids Understanding Deployments' goal was to alleviate some of the kids some of the inner workings of the mobility

n - 'Why my Mom wears combat boots'



photo by 2nd Lt. Robin Jackson, 349th Public Affairs

ive into the tall grass for a quick "camouflage"
ng Deployment event, April 22.



photo by Amy Thureau, Base Multimedia Service Center

behind a barricade. Kids Understanding
e family stresses of deployments by showing
y process.

said Angie Sheppard, wife of Staff Sgt. Ryan Sheppard from the 815th Air Mobility Squadron. "The volunteers were very helpful and informative and I got a better understanding of what it takes for my husband to deploy out."

"I believe this really put two and two together for the children giving them an understanding of what I do when I am gone," Sergeant Sheppard said. "Now they can picture what I might be driving, or what kind of phone I will be using to call home with when I am deployed."

"I hope Travis does this again," he said. "KUDOS brings the Air Force and families together, amplifies spouse support and gives the kids an awesome opportunity to have fun with some really cool equipment."

Organizers were pleased with the turn out and the effectiveness of the event.

"We were very pleased with the outcome of the event," said Susan Drake, a Family Advocacy nurse at DGMC.

"When we heard kids say things like, 'I want to come again next year,' we knew it was a success. Our mission was to say 'thank you' to our military families and to give them something that recognized their dedication. I think we accomplished this to some degree."

"Thanks to the Travis Team for allowing



photo by Amy Thureau, Base Multimedia Service Center

Cargo of love: Family members climb the ladder of a C-5 Galaxy aircraft and learn how much cargo the C-5 is capable of transporting.

the families to come out," Mrs. Sheppard said. "Now we have seen what our spouses and moms and dads do when they deploy — it was a huge success."

349th Maintenance Group Quarterly Award Winners for 2nd Quarter 2004

Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter -
Master Sgt. Rafael B. Gaddi,
349th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron

Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter -
Tech. Sgt. Lantrel J. Stockton,
349th Equipment Maintenance Squadron

Airman of the Quarter -
Senior Airman Heather Bradley,
349th Equipment Maintenance Squadron

Motorcycle mentorship key to safe ride

by Gen. John W. Handy

Air Mobility Command

As we roll into summer, nicer weather and motorcycles can add up to a deadly combination. In 2003, our Air Force lost 24 Airmen in motorcycle accidents and Air Mobility Command has already suffered its first fatality for 2004. I don't want to wait for the second.

In support of the Chief of Staff and his vision of a mentor for every motorcycle rider, AMC has created the Motorcycle Concept of Operations Working Group. It's mission—implement this command's Motorcycle Mentorship plan to improve rider safety throughout AMC.

The heart of the plan is for experienced riders to mentor those less knowledgeable and encourage them to take the time to learn about the challenges that come with motorcycle ownership. Through this, we hope to improve riding skills and reduce chances for mishaps by creating a supportive environment for responsible motorcycle riding while having fun in the process.

Poor risk management, failure to operate vehicles safely and riding beyond one's abilities are the major factors we've



seen in AF motorcycle mishaps. Males, ages 18-25, are a major "at risk" category for motorcycle mishaps. By implementing programs such as riding clubs at our bases as well as other mentorship initiatives we hope to mitigate these factors and keep everyone safe.

Our concern for our people should not stop at the end of the workday. Just as we provide oversight and guidance to our young officers and airmen while in the duty section, we should do the same in their off-duty activities.

Always keep in mind our people are our most valuable asset.

REQUIRED MOTORCYCLE PROTECTIVE SAFETY GEAR

- Protective Helmet (Required for all passengers as well)
- Impact-resistant goggles or full-face shield
- Brightly colored or contrasting vest or jacket as an outer upper garment during the day and reflective garment during the night
- Long-sleeve shirts or jackets
- Full-Fingered motorcycle gloves or mittens
- Long trousers and sturdy footwear

Air Force Instruction 91-207, Air Force Traffic Safety Program requires motorcycle operators to wear the above listed safety gear. Military personnel must wear these items both on and off base, as well as both on and off duty. Civilians are required to wear these items while riding on base.

Your greatest challenge as a rider lies in the environment outside the base. Busy highway traffic and higher speeds off base increase the need for personal protective equipment and safe riding practices.

Safety tips to ensure a happy 4th of July celebration

- A professional fireworks display is far more satisfying and spectacular than one you could stage for yourself. Fireworks are extremely dangerous in untrained hands.
- If you choose to use "home" style fireworks, ensure children understand they are not toys. Even something as innocuous as a Sparkler can cause severe burns or death.
- If you choose to allow children to assist in the ignition and use of the fireworks, ensure they're supervised at all times. Never leave a child unsupervised with fireworks in use.
- Always be alert for the potential of a fire from your fireworks. Stay away from structures and never use in dry or windy areas.



General relinquishes command, retire

Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III returned to Robins Air Reserve Base, Ga., May 11 to say goodbye to friends and associates, relinquish command of Air Force Reserve Command and conclude a military career that spanned nearly four decades.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper presided at a ceremony attended by 1,000 people. General Sherrard's retirement is effective June 1.

Maj. Gen. John A. Bradley has been nominated by the president to the Senate for promotion to lieutenant general and appointment as chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command. If General Bradley is not confirmed by June 1, Maj. Gen. John J. Batbie Jr., AFRC vice commander, will continue to lead the command until General Bradley is confirmed.

"As I close out my career with our United States Air Force and Air Force Reserve Command, I wish to thank every member of the Air Force Reserve for their unselfish and dedicated service to our command and this nation," said General Sherrard. "I am so honored to have been privileged to serve with so many talented members, both present and past, who are true heroes by every

measure of merit."

Although the headquarters for AFRC is at Robins, the general worked in the Pentagon where as chief of Air Force Reserve he served on the Air Staff since September 1998.

General Sherrard began his Air Force career in July 1965, attending flight training at Moody AFB, Ga., some 140 miles south of Robins. After a tour of active duty, he transferred to the Air Force Reserve in October 1971 at Eglin AFB Field 3, Fla., serving as an instructor pilot and C-130A/B and AC-130A flight examiner and squadron operations officer.

During his career, he commanded a flying group, two flying wings and two numbered air forces.

He spent more than five years at Robins. From October 1984 to August 1986 he was deputy chief of staff for plans, programs and manpower in the Reserve headquarters. He served as vice commander of the Air Force Reserve from July 1993 to October 1994 and from January 1995 to January 1998.

In April 1998, the president nominated him to become chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander of AFRC. The general was confirmed by the Senate in September of that year.

General Sherrard called the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, his most demanding and challenging time as AFRC commander. However, at the same time he said the Reserve's response to the attacks and the subsequent actions supporting Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom were the command's most significant achievements during his tenure. (AFRC *News Service*)

Best wishes: Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper, left, and Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III, chief of Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, look over a letter from the president congratulating General Sherrard on the occasion of his retirement from the Air Force.



Veterans Affairs reaches out to new combat veterans

The Department of Veterans Affairs is expanding its efforts to reach veterans of combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan to ensure they are aware of their benefits.

Anthony Principi, VA secretary, is sending a letter to more than 150,000 veterans of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom who have recently separated from the military to thank them for their service. In the letter, he also reminds them of their eligibility for VA health-care and other benefits.

"I want these men and women to know that we are grateful for their service to our country," Mr. Principi said. "Those who served in Afghanistan, Iraq and other places around the world have risked their lives to make America more secure. One of the ways the nation shows its gratitude is by ensuring veterans receive the benefits they deserve."

As the veterans continue to leave active

duty, VA officials said they expect to mail about 10,000 letters each month. The first letters were sent May 10.

The additional outreach to those recently deployed to combat areas alerts them to special eligibility that increases their access to health care for two years after separation from the military for illnesses and injuries that may be the result of military service.

For those medical problems, VA waives copayments for inpatient and outpatient care. The VA focuses special attention on those with service-related disabilities, officials said. The department's goal is a seamless transition from military to VA services, with claims for financial benefits receiving expedited processing.

For seriously wounded people, the VA has counselors working at the bedsides of patients in military hospitals with the largest numbers of casualties to begin benefit applications before they leave the

military. The department's social service people work at these military facilities to plan health-care coordination as servicemembers move from military to VA care. This helps ensure a smooth transition to a VA hospital or clinic near the veteran's intended residence for continuing medical care, officials said.

"VA has learned many lessons since the Gulf War in 1991 and other conflicts, which will ensure that this newest generation of war veterans receives the health care and assistance they deserve when they return to civilian life," Mr. Principi said.

For additional information on benefits for returning Active Duty, National Guard and Reserve service members of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom visit the VA web site at: <http://www.vba.va.gov/EFIF/>.

(Courtesy of American Forces Press Service)

Segregation leads to vicious cycle

by Maj. Chris Clay

349th Military Equal Opportunity

One of the responsibilities of the Military Equal Opportunity Office is to investigate allegations of unlawful discrimination, and unfair treatment within the Air Force Reserve. Unlawful discrimination occurs when a person is treated unfairly based upon their gender, skin color, national origin, race, or religion.

Long before an unlawful discrimination complaint is filed, a complainant will often perceive they are isolated or segregated in some manner on the job. History has shown us, and the courts have consistently ruled since 1954, that institutional segregation (i.e. sanctioned by the organization) is inherently unequal. Research suggests that personal segregation (i.e. not sanctioned by the organization, but practiced by individuals) in the workplace can also be harmful.

Segregation has been linked to income inequality and barriers to the entrance of

minorities and women into jobs that offer high wages, benefits and opportunities for mobility. People who perceive they are segregated by the organization or by individuals tend to act as though they are segregated. They tend to talk less, trust less, contribute less and complain more. As a result, segregated persons in the workplace are more likely to be punished than others are.

When a commander or supervisor takes adverse action against a member who already feels isolated, that member is likely to perceive they were disliked from the start, and the adverse action validates their perception. Thus a vicious cycle is created. Other results may include, underachievement, perpetuation of stereotypes, allegations of discrimination, and lower organizational productivity.

Studies have shown that segregation in the workplace have a devastating effect upon retention because job satisfaction and organizational commitment are influenced by, among other things, the

degree of social support a person receives from peers and supervisors, and distributive justice.

As an Air Force Reserve member, including supervisors and commanders, it is important to consider some of the following questions:

-- Who do I spend most of my time with at squadron functions?

-- Who is my back to? Who are the people I tend to avoid? What have I done to support this person(s)?

-- Have I taken the time to get to know other squadron members' civilian/military accomplishments and interests? Have I met their family?

-- Who gets the choice TDY opportunities, promotions, voluntary transfers, awards and outstanding evaluations? Who doesn't?

Effective integration across racial, cultural, religious and gender barriers takes a little extra effort, but it is time well spent—an invaluable investment in our people, our organization and our mission.

News Briefs

"MyEasyPayment" available

Airmen with government travel cards can now make payments to their accounts online with the "MyEasyPayment" system. This option allows Airmen with government travel cards to payoff residual or unexpected charges not covered by split disbursement payments, said Josephine Davis, the Air Force banking liaison officer.

When Airmen return from travel, they file a voucher so they can be reimbursed for their expenses. That payment, or disbursement, is split between the Airmen's personal-checking account and their travel-card account. Airmen are responsible for indicating how much money should be sent to the travel-card account. If there is a miscalculation of the amount owed on the travel card, there can be residual or unexpected charges still owed.

An example of an unexpected or residual charge is when an Airman makes a purchase overseas and the exchange rate changes before the merchant processes the charge. Another example is when Airmen lose receipts and forget about charges on their cards.

Questions on being reimbursed for unexpected or residual charges should be directed to military travel pay office. This system is available at www.myeasypayment.com. Cardholders need to know the amount they want to pay on the card, the card's account number and security code, and their checking account and bank routing numbers. (AFRC News Service)

Golf tournament postponed

The Wing's Top 3 Council golf tournament, to help raise funds for Operation Teddy Bear, originally scheduled for May 18, has been postponed until August 27.

The tournament, at Cypress Lakes, has a shotgun start at noon and is a 4-man scramble best ball.

Prizes will be awarded for longest drive, closest to the hole, lowest team score and there will be a putting contest.

Proceeds benefit Operation Teddy Bear which brings Christmas cheer to underprivileged children in the local area.

Interested people may call Master Sgt. Leslie Yu at (707) 424-0774 or email him at Leslie.Yu@travis.af.mil.

TSP season ends June 30

This Thrift Saving Program season applies only to regular TSP contributions - not TSP catch-up contributions.

TSP offers investors the chance for lower taxes each year they contribute while not having to pay taxes on earnings until they reach retirement.

Military members can enroll through the Defense Finance and Accounting Service web site at <http://www.dfas.mil/emss/>. Contribution allocations can be made by calling the ThriftLine at (504) 255-8777 or on the TSP web site at <http://www.tsp.gov/>. For general TSP questions, call (800) 616-3775.

Specific TSP information is available for military members at http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/mpf/TSP/thrift_savings_plan.htm.

Contribution limits for civilian employees are based on the employees retirement system.

Specific information is available for civilian employees at <http://www.tsp.gov/> or the BEST homepage at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/dpc/BEST/menu.htm>. (AFPC)

Our purpose is to serve

by Chaplain (Capt.) Tom Dawson
349th Air Mobility Wing

We have had uninvited guests at our home. Last week a good-looking couple showed up at our house, invited themselves in and wouldn't leave! How rude!

At first we were enjoying their company but we quickly realized they had a bad habit of not cleaning up after themselves. All they did was hang out around our pool sunbathing, swimming and taking naps!

Yesterday we gave them the boot – we kicked them out and now they are living on the streets of Citrus Heights, Calif. Call us insensitive, but you would have to call them...ducks!

A pair of beautiful mallards, a male and female, decided they liked the looks of our pool and began taking up residence in our backyard. We took this as a compliment because the pool and landscaping were designed to give a "woodland" feel. However, we soon realized ducks are dirty! They leave little "presents" everywhere –

including in the pool. The novelty of having "Donald" and his wife camping out in the backyard quickly wore off. So we actively encouraged them to go find a pond.

Ducks were created for ponds not pools. They live to fish and they fish to live. It's in a pond that they will find fish and not in a pool.

You and I were created to live in the world. We were created for a purpose, to love and serve God and people. Often we spend too much time in the clean, safe, familiar "pool" of our own lives and too little time in the "pond" we call the world. However, it is normally in the "pond" that we can make a difference. It is in the "pond" where people are hurting and in need. Yes the "pond" is often dirty, it's full of muck, the water is cold, and it often stinks. But it's in the "pond" that we find opportunities to serve others.

"If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?" 1 John 3:17 (The Holy Bible)

So come on in--the "pond" is rewarding.

Wing Vacancies

Intel positions available

The Intelligence Office has openings for interested, qualified individuals. Applicants should be comfortable speaking in front of groups, and be interested in world affairs. The job requires mobility status. Deployments are readily available and have been fast-paced and interesting. Formal training at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas, lasts approximately 30 weeks.

Contact 1st Lt. Loren Hanks at (707) 424-5040 for more information.

Wing Historian needed

Members looking for a high profile position should apply for the enlisted opening in the Wing's History Office.

The requirements are: 5-level; eligibility for a top-secret security clearance; a score of 70 or better in the general category; type 20 words per minute; and have three years retainability after completion of the technical school. Interested members should contact Capt. Terry Cotter at (707) 424-3922.

Be energized by never forgetting where we all began

by Master Sgt. Darrell Payne
Air Force Personnel Center

I was privileged to attend the Basic Military Training graduation ceremony recently of a young man that I know through a good friend.

That morning I got up and put on my sharpest uniform - a carefully creased shirt, pressed pants, highly shined dress shoes, ribbons, name tag and hat. I wanted to look sharp on his special occasion.

As we arrived at Lackland's parade field, I was amazed at the sense of urgency that was in the air - one that I had not seen for a long time. People were buzzing everywhere. Proud family members were trying to get a good seat to see their new trainee at graduation time.

The graduates were marching in tight formations from the training side of the base. Band members, also trainees, were getting their instruments ready as the flights assembled on the parade grounds.

As I was completely engulfed by all the activities going on, I was approached

several times by visiting family members wanting to know tidbits of information: Do you know where training flight 367 is? Do you know which way the band will be facing? Are you some type of instructor?

That's when it really hit me, I was at the very place I started my career. Twenty something years ago, I was preparing to graduate just as these folks were today.

As I watched the troops march by me on the way to the parade field, I realized that my replacement was somewhere in one of the graduating flights.

The ceremony began at 9 a.m. sharp. No delays, no interruptions; the ceremony was done with perfection from the opening to the closing.

As the troops went through their drill maneuvers on the parade field in preparation for review by the commander, I could feel my eyes starting to swell. I was here to see the start of an Air Force career, just as my parents did in 1982.

I felt so proud to be part of the Air Force family and this trip, at this time, was the most meaningful adventure that I

have experienced during my career.

You see, sometimes we (Air Force enlisted members) forget that we all started this journey on this same parade field. Some have paid and are paying the ultimate price of freedom for this great country of ours - a journey beginning at this very place.

I was immensely "blued" during the ceremony. If I had my way, I would have marched with the new troops to show a sign of commitment and solidarity.

Of course that was physically impossible; however, I can assure you I took each step with each flight as they passed in review.

It was a proud time and I could see by the gleaming faces the graduates were ready; they were on the way to bigger and better things by serving in the best Air Force in the world.

On the drive home, I reflected what I had just experienced - something I feel each NCO should do once at least once during their career. To get reenergized and refocused...to get "re-blued."



Chief Master Sergeant

Tamara E. Mirgon, 349th SFS
David S. Newman, 55th APS
Jimmie D. Speers, 55th APS



Senior Master Sergeant

Todd M. McCammon, 45th APS
Joseph A. Jenkins, 45th APS
Michael D. Beck, 349th CES
Wendi J. Tyler-Zimmerman, 45th APS
Michael S. McMahon, 79th ARS
Blake C. Cooke, 45th APS
Juan Cruz, 349th MSS



Master Sergeant

Luis M. Caragan, Jr., 349th MSS
Cedric D. Corner, 349th AMXS
Jose A. Cruz, 349th AMXS
Ray L. Davis, 45th APS
Bruce M. Dingman, 55th APS
Anthony Hall III, 349th AES
Grayland L. Hilt, 349th AMW
Matthew S. Kernan, 349th AMW
Alan E. McCornack, 349th AMXS
Arthur L. Morris, 349th AMXS
Andre A. Morton, 55th APS
Ronald R. Nielsen, 349th CES
Gina M. Spears, 349th MAS
Kirk R. Vincelet, 55th APS
Matthew D. Willing, 79th ARS



Technical Sergeant

Michael A. Alvarado, 82nd APS
Rodelio M. Baluyot, 55th APS
Alfie S. B. Bondoc, 349th AES
Venancio P. Camino, 349th CS
Katherine W. Castro, 349th MSS
Steven J. Chick, 301st AS
Eric S. Dennis, 82nd APS
Freddie Dinoso, 349th ASTS
Dion J. Duenas, 704th MDS
Jessica E. Elejalde, 349th ASTS
Benjamin J. Fandinola, 45th APS
Alexander A. Gomez, 749th AMXS
Kris D. Howard, 45th APS
Kelly J. Johnson, 349th CMS
Joshua C. Laroe, 349th CES
Gary W. Lentsch, 45th APS
Jason C. Marez, 349th CES
Mary Irene S. Maquindang, 349th MDG
Margaret L. Merin, 349th EMS
Paul N. Ochs, Jr., 312th AS
Joy G. Padayhag, 312th AS
Benita D. Robbins-Smisek, 45th APS
Jenica L. Seabourn, 349th CES
David Trinh, 45th APS



Staff Sergeant

Daryl M. Barnhisel, 349th EMS
Heather A. Bradley, 349th EMS
Rachael K. Bradley, 604th MDS
Ryan W. Collette, 312th AS
Emmanuel C. DeCastro, 55th APS



Senior Airman

Larisa M. Ciaston, 749th AMXS
Kenneth D. Gallegos II, 82nd APS
Steven Lee Garbett, 349th AES
Michael J. Gardner, 604th MDS
Erwin S. Hufana, 349th ASTS
Kathryn L. Lamastus, 604th MDS
Colleen R. McCray, 82nd APS
Brian M. Tack, 349th EMS
Brandon P. Tenney, 349th CES



Airman First Class

Geoffrey D. Henry, 82nd APS
Nasira M. Rushdan, 349th ASTS
Alexandra M. Santos, 349th MSS



Airman

Richard E. Attar, 349th CES

Promotions

(All promotions effective May 1, 2004)

349th AIR MOBILITY WING
520 WALDRON STREET
TRAVIS AFB CA 94535-2100
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

PRESORT FIRST CLASS MAIL
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
HAYWARD, CALIFORNIA
PERMIT NO. 3335

Flag Day - June 14
Father's Day - June 20
Independence Day -
July 4

**"Everyone belongs and it is our
goal to insure that everyone
participates because they belong."**

**-- From the inaugural address of
President George W. Bush**